

D. L. BLISS & EMERALD BAY STATE PARKS



OUR MISSION

The mission of the California Department of Parks and Recreation is to provide for the health, inspiration and education of the people of California by helping to preserve the state's extraordinary biological diversity, protecting its most valued natural and cultural resources, and creating opportunities for high-quality outdoor recreation.

ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER

Governor

MIKE CHRISMAN

Secretary for Resources

RUTH COLEMAN

Director, California State Parks



California State Parks does not discriminate against individuals with disabilities. Prior to arrival, visitors with disabilities who need assistance should contact the park at the phone number below. To receive this publication in an alternate format, write to the Communications Office at the following address.

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D.L. Bliss & Emerald Bay State Parks

P. O. Box 266, Tahoma, CA 96142

D. L. Bliss (530) 525-7277

Emerald Bay (530) 541-3030 (summer only)

Lake Sector Headquarters (530) 525-3345



Lester Beach, D.L. Bliss

D.L. Bliss and Emerald Bay State Parks include some six miles of magnificent Lake Tahoe shoreline and cover 1,830 acres in California's Sierra Nevada. From the scenic overlook on Highway 89, you can see a brilliant panorama of Emerald Bay, Fannette Island, Lake Tahoe and the distant Nevada shore. Nearby Eagle Creek cascades over three falls and disappears into the lake.

The grandeur of the parks and their setting is a product of successive upheavals of the mountain-building processes that raised the Sierra Nevada. Lake Tahoe, from an Indian word interpreted to mean "Lake of the Sky," lies east of the main Sierra crest at an elevation of over 6,200 feet. After the mountains rose to the east and west, the lake's basin was completed by glaciers and lava seeping from volcanic vents, especially to the north. The lake is over 22 miles long, 12 miles wide and more than 1,600 feet deep. You can see approximately 70 feet into its depths from promontories such as Rubicon Point. The lake level is controlled by a small dam on the Truckee River at

Tahoe City. More than 50 streams feed water into the lake. The Truckee river is the only outflow.

The Lake Tahoe area has a wide variety of trees and plants. Tall and majestic sugar pines grow on the thin granitic soil in the center of D.L. Bliss. The parks also contain ponderosa and jeffrey pines, white and red firs, incense cedar, Sierra juniper and black cottonwood. Along the streams grow a lush combination of alders, quaking aspen, mountain dogwood, service berry, Sierra maple, bitter cherry and willow. As for wildflowers, there are columbine, leopard lily, lupine, bleeding heart, mint, yellow monkey flower and nightshade. Brush areas are composed of ceanothus, chinquapin, currant, gooseberry, huckleberry oak, manzanita and other shrubs that provide colorful blooms and fragrances in season.

Summer temperatures here range from about 75 degrees during the day to the low 40s at night. Winter temperatures average from a high of 40 to a low of 20 degrees. During extremely cold winters Emerald Bay freezes over.



Vikingsholm, Emerald Bay

The parks are closed during the winter. Depending on the weather, they are open from late May until the end of September.

D. L. Bliss State Park is named for a pioneering lumberman, railroad owner and banker of the region. His family donated 744 acres to the California State Park System in 1929. The nucleus of Emerald Bay State Park, including Vikingsholm, was sold for half the appraised value to the State by Placerville lumberman Harvey West in 1953. The Save the Redwoods League was instrumental in this acquisition.

VIKINGSHOLM

In 1928, Mrs. Lora J. Knight of Santa Barbara purchased this isolated site at the head of Emerald Bay. She instructed Lennart Palme, a Swedish-born architect and nephew by marriage, to design a home without disturbing a single one of the site's magnificent trees. After a

trip to Scandinavia, they decided to reproduce Norwegian farmsteads, wooden stave churches and a castle.

Vikingsholm was completed in September 1929. Mrs. Knight also had guest houses and the tea house on Fannette Island built. She spent her summers at the home until her death in 1945.

The methods and materials used in the construction of Vikingsholm, including the granite boulders of the foundations and walls, are those used in ancient Scandinavia. Towers, intricate carvings and hand-hewn timbers were used to create the home. The sod roofs with their living grass and flowers are reproduced from actual sites in Norway. Many of the furnishings that Mrs. Knight wanted for Vikingsholm were so historically significant that their export was forbidden by the Norwegian and Swedish governments. Therefore, she had the furnishings copied in detail, down to the measurements, colorations and aging of the



wood. Vikingsholm is a National Historic Register Site.

You can take a guided tour of Vikingsholm for a nominal fee from mid-June through September. The building is about a mile down by trail from the parking lot at the Emerald Bay Overlook. Call the park for information about accessibility at Vikingsholm.

CAMPING

The parks have 268 family campsites (some accessible), each with a table, cupboard and stove, plus nearby restrooms and hot showers. Although there are no hookups, some sites at D.L. Bliss will accommodate trailers up to 15 feet long or motor homes up to 18 feet. Emerald Bay can accommodate trailers up to 18 feet long or motorhomes up to 21 feet. The group campground will accommodate up to 50 people, with a limit of 10 cars. Reserve campsites by calling 1-800-444-PARK (7275) and charging reservations to your Visa®, Discover®Card or MasterCard®.

There are also 20 primitive campsites that are accessible by boat. While the parks themselves have no launching facilities, boats can be launched from private facilities about 6 miles to the north or south.

Campers can enjoy swimming, sunbathing and fishing for rainbow, brown and Mackinaw trout and Kokanee salmon (a land-

locked form of the Pacific sockeye), all successfully introduced into the lake.

During the summer, interpretive programs are scheduled. Hiking is also popular. Hikers must stay on the trails. Smoking is prohibited on the trails since fire is an ever-present danger.

Parking and restrooms at D.L. Bliss are barrier free, and videotapes and scripted videos of the tours are available at Emerald Bay. Call the parks for specific accessibility information.

Dogs are allowed in the parks. However, they must be kept on a leash during the day and in an enclosed vehicle or tent at night. Due to the possible danger to wildlife and other park visitors, dogs are not permitted on the trails, beaches or in the Vikingsholm area.

PLEASE HELP

The unspoiled beauty of the Emerald Bay area was recognized in September 1969, when it was designated as a National Natural Landmark by the U.S. Department of Interior. Please help us to keep it that way so your children and their children will be able to enjoy it as well.



- **Balancing Rock Nature Trail (self-guided)**
0.5 mi.
- **Rubicon/Emerald Bay Trail**
(Calawee Cove to Eagle Point)
5.5 mi.
- **Calawee Cove to Vikingsholm**
4.5 mi.
- **Calawee Cove to Emerald Point**
3.0 mi.
- **Lighthouse Trail**
.75 mi.

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